



CITY OF
GRAND RAPIDS
IT'S IN MINNESOTA'S NATURE

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 06, 2026

4:00 PM

Commission Chair Bignall called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

CALL OF ROLL:

PRESENT:

Commissioner Betsy Johnson
Commissioner Paul Bignall
Commissioner David Marquardt
Commissioner David Kreitzer
Commissioner Amanda Lamppa
Commissioner Isaac Meyer
Commissioner Matt Maves

STAFF:

Will Richter
Cynthia Lyman

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Consider approval of minutes from the June 4, 2026 regular meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Johnson, Seconded by Commissioner Lamppa to approve the minutes from the June 4, 2026, regular meeting. The following voted in favor thereof: Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Bignall, Commissioner Marquardt, Commissioner Kreitzer, Commissioner Lamppa, Commissioner Meyer, Commissioner Maves. Opposed: None, motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

2. Conduct a Public Hearing to consider a variance petition submitted by Troy Amunrud.

Zoning Administrator, Will Richter, presented a power point to the Commissioners of the timeline leading up to Troy Amunrud's variance request. The timeline started with the original zoning permit for a privacy fence from July 1, 2025. Community Development staff noticed that there could be a potential violation with the fence height in June of 2026 and the petitioner was called. After that phone call the petitioner requested a variance for a higher fence where it was originally only supposed to be 42".

Motion made by Commissioner Johnson, Seconded by Commissioner Marquardt to open the Public Hearing to consider the variance petition submitted by Troy Amunrud. The following

voted in favor thereof: Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Bignall, Commissioner Marquardt, Commissioner Kreitzer, Commissioner Lamppa, Commissioner Meyer, Commissioner Maves. Opposed: None, motion passed.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Individuals may address the Planning Commission about any non-public hearing item or any item not included on the Regular Meeting Agenda. Speakers are requested to come to the podium, state their name and address for the record and limit their remarks to three (3) minutes.

Howard Hoganson of 801 6th Ave SW addressed the Commission. He said that he lives across the alley and supports all of the improvements that Troy Amunrud has done to his property and is impressed that they have saved all of the trees.

Motion made by Commissioner Lamppa, Seconded by Commissioner Meyer to close the Public Hearing for Troy Amunrud's variance request. The following voted in favor thereof: Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Bignall, Commissioner Marquardt, Commissioner Kreitzer, Commissioner Lamppa, Commissioner Meyer, Commissioner Maves. Opposed: None, motion passed.

MISCELLANEOUS:

The Commissioners reviewed the Considerations for the record:

1. Is this an "Area" variance rather than a "Use" variance?

Why/Why not- Yes, it is an area variance.

2. Does the proposal put property to use in a *reasonable manner*?

Why/Why not- Yes, it is a reasonable manner for the yard.

3. Is the owner's plight due to circumstances which are unique to the property and self-created by the owner? which are not

Why/Why not- No, the circumstances are not unique to the property, however it was self-created as the original fence permit was for 42".

4. Is the variance in *harmony with* the purposes and intent of the *ordinance*?

Why/Why not- No, it is not in harmony with the ordinance requirement of 42".

5. Will the variance, if granted alter the *essential* character of the locality?

Why/Why not- No, the extra 2' does not change the character.

6. Is the variance *consistent* with the *comprehensive plan*?

Why/Why not- Yes, it is consistent with the comprehensive plan and his neighbor appreciates his efforts.

Motion made by Commissioner Bignall, Seconded by Commissioner Lamppa that based upon the findings of facts presented here today that the Planning Commission denies Troy Amunrud's variance. Voting Yea: Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Bignall, Commissioner Marquardt, Commissioner Kreitzer, Commissioner Lamppa, Commissioner Meyer, Commissioner Maves. Opposed: None, motion passed.

REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES:

Zoning Administrator Will Richter had an update that the project is about to be passed by the City Council. It maintains diversity with site development standards and can't be cut into smaller pieces. It is a trade off with site development.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Bignall at 4:28pm.

Respectfully submitted by Cynthia Lyman